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United States Department of Agriculture,

OFFICE OF EXPERIMENT STATIONS—Circular No. 47.

A. C. True, Director.

THE CARD INDEX OF EXPERIMENT STATION LITERATURE.

It is the purpose of this circular to outline briefly the general plan of the subject index of experiment station literature regularly issued in card form by this Office, and to state the conditions governing the distribution and sale of the index.

The index at the present time covers only the publications of the agricultural experiment stations in the United States, including all the bulletins, circulars, and reports, but not such publications as press bulletins, except as these are reprinted in the regular publications mentioned. Publications of this Department and of State boards or departments of agriculture are therefore not included. The index begins with the publications of the stations for the year 1888, and is kept as nearly up to date as is practicable.

The index comprises thirteen primary divisions, as follows: (1) General sciences, (2) air and water, (3) soils, (4) fertilizers, (5) plants, (6) foods, (7) animals, (8) entomology, (9) dairying, (10) technology, (11) agricultural engineering, (12) statistics, (13) miscellaneous. These subjects have been divided and subdivided only so far as seemed necessary to facilitate references to the individual entries of the index. Under general sciences are placed only such entries as relate to the general principles of the various sciences which lie at the foundation of experimental investigations in agriculture. Under statistics are included the entries relating to the organization, equipment, and general operations of the stations. The other primary divisions provide for the articles relating more directly to the agricultural and economic investigations. The plan of the index permits the addition of references to any literature relating to agriculture, and also affords a wide opportunity for the extension of the index by individual students for their own special purposes.

Each of the headings, as a rule, contains entries for all the important articles on that subject. Often, however, an article may deal with several subjects and be indexed only under the most important phase of the work. As an illustration of this point, an article dealing with the use of fertilizers for particular crops on certain soils may appear only under one of the headings—Fertilizers, Plants, Soils. This has been necessary in order to keep the number of cards within reasonable limits. Where the index, however, is used in its entirety, as planned, cross references lessen the difficulty from this source.

The index is printed on cards of a standard library size (2 by 5 inches). The divisions and subdivisions are arranged on a decimal system and are plainly indicated by the use of division cards of different colors.

Each index card contains the title of an article, the name of its author, a reference to the publication in which it appeared and to the Experiment Station Record in which an abstract of the article may be found, and a condensed statement of its contents. At the upper right-hand corner of the card is a number indicating under what heading the card should be placed in the index. The order in which the cards are printed is indicated at the lower left-hand corner. It is designed that the cards should be arranged in alphabetical order only under the final subdivisions of the index.

One copy of the index is sent without charge to each of the agricultural colleges and experiment stations and the State boards and commissioners of agriculture. A key to the index, containing the system of classification, is sent with the first installment of cards. Besides this free distribution, the Office is prepared, under the authority of the law, to furnish a limited number of sets of the index at a price only sufficient to cover additional cost of printing. This is estimated at $2 per thousand cards. For the division cards an additional charge of $1.25 is made. A few sets have been broken and portions of these also may be obtained at the same rate per thousand cards.

Sets of division cards and 22,000 index cards, bringing the index up, approximately, to January 1, 1901, are available and one of these sets will be sent to any address upon receipt of $45.25. Subscribers are also informed when each successive lot of 1,000 cards is ready for distribution. About 1,500 cards are required for the station publications issued each year. Only 300 sets of the index are printed.

Payments should be made by United States money order in favor of F. L. Evans, Disbursing Officer, but, like all other communications relating to the index, should be forwarded in envelopes addressed to the Director of the Office of Experiment Stations.

Respectfully submitted.

A. C. True,
Director.

Approved:
James Wilson,
Secretary of Agriculture.

Washington, D. C., *April 19, 1902.*